

The Closing of the Watch



On Maundy Thursday Jesus washes our feet and calls us to live lives of service, washing the feet of the people around us. Jesus then moves to the Garden of Gethsemane, and having turned to find us sleeping, asks “Could you not keep awake one hour?” We watch and wait, at the altar of repose, with the reserved sacrament, the body and blood of Christ, until 9:00 Friday morning. Jesus is taken from us, arrested in the night, and by Friday morning is being led toward the Golgotha and the cross.

We close the watch at the altar of repose with a simplified version of Morning Prayer, during which we consume the reserved sacrament, leaving the chalice and patten empty on the altar. We conclude the service with the words, “Leave this place in silence. The one whom you seek is not here.”

Our Holy Week journey will continue with the Proper Liturgy for Good Friday at 12:30.